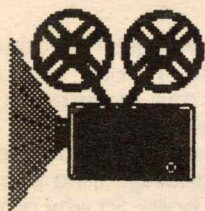


# LETTERS FROM CAMP

mars/avril 1994

"Les Versants Cachés"

Volume 1 Numéro 3



## CINEMA

### SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION

et deux niveaux de discrimination ?

Richard Genest

Pour tous ceux qui croient que la cause homosexuelle n'aura fait de progrès appréciables que lorsqu'elle aura banalisé son sujet même, lorsque l'homosexualité cessera d'être considérée comme une différence à mettre en évidence, il y aurait de quoi célébrer l'arrivée de ce film. Pas que le personnage principal en soit un James Bond ou un Indiana Jones gay, bien au contraire; il s'agit tout simplement d'un jeune noir dont l'orientation sexuelle appert à prime abord n'être qu'un détail du scénario plutôt que sa raison d'être. Aurions-nous droit, enfin, à la soidisant normalité hollywoodienne?

Cette histoire de fausse identité toute simple, d'autant plus vraisemblable qu'on la sait inspirée d'un fait divers authentique, veut nous rappeler que même (et peut-être encore plus) en cette ère de "political correctness", les inégalités sociales demeurent bien présentes.

Un jeune homme noir d'apparence impeccable sonne à la porte d'un couple d'âge moyen, les Kittredge, membres de la haute gomme newyorkaise. Il est blessé; on l'a attaqué dans le parc, juste à côté. La méfiance initiale du couple envers ce garçon s'estompe lorsqu'il leur apprend être un compagnon d'Harvard de leurs deux fils... et l'héritier de Sidney Poitier. En effet, quoi de plus exotique, de plus charmant qu'un Poitier qui vient dîner ?

Le charme, en effet, voilà bien la spécialité du jeune Paul. Quelle surprise pour ce couple aux enfants ingrats que d'entendre cette apparition leur révéler la complicité qui l'unit à son géniteur; il pourrait même

leur décrocher des rôles de figuration dans le prochain film de papa. Il cuisine divinement, connaît la peinture (le domaine de Monsieur Kittredge) et leur sert un discours émouvant sur l'imagination, don que notre société aurait selon lui perdu. Il saura toutefois leur démontrer le contraire.

Chaque situation est établie afin de souligner à double trait le malaise de ce couple aspirant à une ouverture d'esprit que les circonstances, les ayant faits blancs et riches, ne peuvent que restreindre. Ce malaise s'évaporerait au fur et à mesure que Paul s'efforcera de correspondre à leurs attentes, de diminuer ses origines raciales, de se blanchir. Le message est clair: un noir désirant s'immiscer dans la bonne société doit renier ses particularités ethniques.

La supercherie, car c'en est bien une, sera démontée au matin lorsque Madame surprendra son jeune invité au lit en compagnie d'un prostitué qu'il n'aura pu s'empêcher d'aller chercher pour compléter son bonheur. C'est ici que l'on découvre l'homosexualité de Paul. C'est ici aussi que les choses commencent à déraiper pour John Guare, le scénariste aux bonnes intentions.

Paul n'était donc rien de plus qu'un vulgaire quoique très habile menteur. Les Kittredge n'ayant pas été ses seules victimes, ils auront tôt fait de remonter à la source de cette connaissance exemplaire de leurs moindres habitudes lui ayant permis d'élever avec tant de facilité cet écran de fumée: un ancien camarade de classe de leur progéniture. Ce dernier aurait volontairement offert ces informations en échange des faveurs sexuelles du jeune homme, rencontré sous un porche un soir de pluie. Mieux encore, c'est lui qui aurait eu l'idée d'un tel coup monté.

La liste des méfaits du jeune brigand ne s'arrête pas là. Après avoir convaincu un couple hétéro de l'héberger, il profite de l'absence de la dame, travaillant durement afin d'assurer leur maigre subsistance, pour séduire son amoureux. Ce dernier, devant l'incompréhension de sa copine à qui il révélera tout, se suicidera quelques jours plus tard.

"Six Degrees of Separation" se veut un doigt accusateur pointé vers l'hypocrisie. Celle de

jeunes adultes ne voyant aucune contradiction dans le fait d'étudier aux frais de papa-maman tout en blâmant ces derniers de tous les maux qui accablent ce monde. Celle d'un couple, ayant bâti sa fortune sur le marché de l'art à coups de transaction douteuses, s'offensant lorsqu'un présumé ami de leurs enfants, qui leurs sont par ailleurs quasi inconnus, se révèle être un imposteur. Celle des gens aux idées pseudo-libérales qui oublient que la discrimination va plus loin que l'utilisation du mot "nègre". Pourtant, malgré la force de ses dialogues, Guare ne parvient pas à nous convaincre. C'est qu'il se rend lui-même coupable du crime qu'il croit dénoncer.

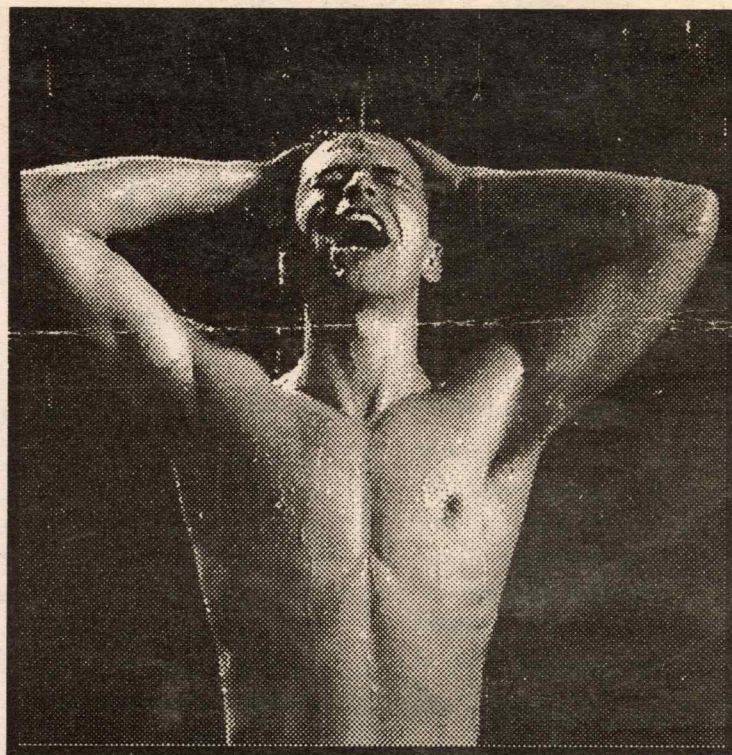
Les riches homosexuels blancs, veut-il nous faire comprendre, n'ont qu'une passion: enseigner au premier jeune noir pauvre venu comment berner les gens de la classe supérieure. Et si cet instinct ne vous paraît pas assez auto-destructeur, on en rajoute: non contents de voir le dit jeune noir déguerpir trois mois plus tard, ayant suffisamment maîtrisé la leçon pour se permettre d'emporter ordinateur, chaîne stéréo et vêtements, ceux-ci ne désirent rien de plus que de le retrouver, tel l'enfant prodigue...

Une discrimination en vaut bien une autre. Sous la plume de Guare, l'homosexualité devient un problème psychologique associé aux comportements compulsifs et suicidaires. S'il n'a pu éviter de traiter le sujet, puisqu'il s'agit sans aucun doute d'un détail véridique de l'anecdote, il n'aura pas mieux réussi à s'empêcher de le déformer par le filtre de ses propres préjugés. C'est navrant. Il détenait là l'occasion idéale de raconter une histoire où toutes les minorités seraient respectées.

Sous le couvert d'une dénonciation de l'hypocrisie, John Guare n'aura fait que révéler la sienne propre. Le doigt accusateur aurait-il donc raté sa cible principale ?

**Lesbians Defend**

**Their Land:  
See page 4**



ZERO PATIENCE: UN FILM PAR JOHN GREYSON

## Zero Patience

Ricardo Duarte

Le film *Zero Patience*, par John Greyson (Toronto), est un film musical qui traite du sujet du SIDA. Cette production a coûté moins d'un million dollars et vaut bien la peine de voir.

Le titre du film est un jeu de mots joué sur le personnage principal, un fantôme appelé le malade zero (Patient Zero), Gaetan Dugas, un jeune hôte d'air québécois blâmé d'avoir introduit et étendu le virus VIH en Amérique du Nord. Le fantôme de Gaetan retourne à la terre et visite ses vieux amis qui ne peuvent pas le voir. La seule personne qui le voit est un sexologue/explorateur victorien, Sir Richard Burton, encore vivant grâce à une brève rencontre avec la fontaine de la jeunesse. Burton fait une recherche sur les maladies infectieuses pour ouvrir une exposition au musée d'histoire naturelle de Toronto.

Le film traite principalement de la recherche du docteur Burton, qui cherche parmi ceux qui faisaient partie de la vie de "Patient Zero": sa mère, son docteur, un vieux collègue (une femme Séro-positive) et un vieux ami, Georges un prof de français noir qui est en train de perdre sa vue à cause du SIDA. Georges joue un rôle important parce qu'il en parle et critique les problèmes et les controverses de la communauté séro-positive. En plus, Georges a un amant, qui démontre les deux vies qu'il vit: celle de Georges "le professeur" et celle de Georges lui-même. C'est

parmi ce personnage que Greyson nous montre la réalité quotidienne de la vie de ceux qui sont en train de vivre avec le VIH et le SIDA.

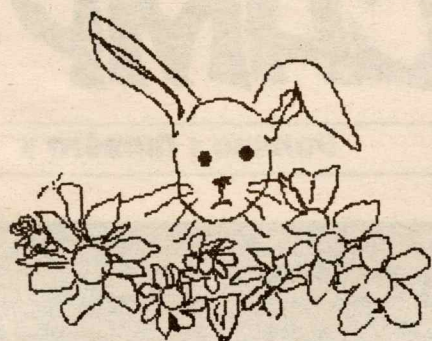
C'est la recherche de "Dick Burton" qui unie tous les caractères du complot, toute l'histoire se passe autour de lui et ses efforts. C'est une des raisons pourquoi "Dick" est le seul qui est en contact avec "Patient Zero." Tous les caractères qui sont séropositifs font partie du groupe d'action directe "ACT UP" qui planifie des manifestations partout dans le film. Pendant que "Dick" fait sa recherche il essaie d'assister à une conférence d'ACT UP malgré le fait qu'il est déjà aperçu comme un con-connard, qu'il justifie avec le fait qu'il est anglais.

Dans une scène particulière, pendant que "Dick" monte l'exposition au musée qui trace les origines du virus VIH au singe vert africain; tout à coup, tous les animaux prennent la forme d'être humains qui commencent à danser et chanter enfin deshabillent "Dick" et "le Patient Zero" avant de quitter la scène. Tout change après ce moment là. "Dick" et "le Patient Zero" pratiquent un peu le sport en chambre, et "Dick" commence à changer ses opinions et commence à voir la réalité des choses.

"Dick" décide de se rendre au fond de la réalité, et consulte avec le virus VIH il même. Le virus lui raconte beaucoup de vérités que tout le monde l'avait déjà raconté, mais qu'il ne voulait pas croire.

continué à la page 3





# Spring is Here

Serena

People are anticipating no snow, warmer weather, summer, being able to frolic in parks... and ...some are glowing with the light of love in their eyes (or is it just because he's finally getting some?) and I look on in disgust because I - the cold hearted slut that I am - am getting teary-eyed.

"It's spring, the birds are chirping, the grass is growing..."\* and people's hormones are going out of control. As a consequence, some people are exercising their pick-up techniques. Some that I've seen or heard lately are:

"I bin watchin' you, and I think you're hot!" (Now that one doesn't work with anyone!)

"You have beautiful eyes, the colour of \_\_\_\_\_."

You have gorgeous hair \_\_\_\_\_."

(Don't overdo it, if you do, you're a wimp and not used to the heavenly sort of company you are in.)

"Give me a high five!" (And it counts for points!)

The type that utters this line is obviously straight, male, an asshole, and likes pubs way too much.)

"I think I'm in love." (Women, run away!)

The surest way to show that you like someone, of course, is eye contact. Don't you just melt when eyes seem to smile at you? Be honest. Be real. Try to have a sane conversation. Find any excuse to touch them in a casual manner.

Bizarre and sleazy lines that just came up:

"Pretend you're a woman."

"I'm a bottom, do me."

"Can I tie you up?"

"I need to be tied up."

"Love me, eat my muff."

"Would you eat your own cum for me?"

"I'm scum, if you happen to like scum why don't you come back to my pond?"

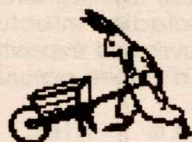
"If I had a large heavy object, you'd be in trouble."

"What would you do if another woman came onto you?"

Personal Ads designed by Serena.

-Slut looking for sleazy, loose wench with strap-on for occasional fisting. Box 69 69

-Adult baby dyke looking for sugar-mommy for love and attention. Box XO XO



## Station "C" Is you and me

The management of Station "C" sent this letter to "The Link" in response to an article in the "Queer Issue" (Feb. 1994).

In recent weeks unfounded rumours have been circulating about Station "C," a complex of bars in the heart of Montréal's "gay village." We wish to set the record straight if you'll pardon the expression.

Station "C" is and will continue to be a gay and lesbian establishment. Since its inception some two and a half years ago, its soul purpose has been to serve these communities. All that we have done, including offering the use of our facilities for over twenty-five gay related community events is evidence of this fact. Station "C" has hosted a variety of fund raising activities...everything from a benefit for the Montréal Lesbian Volleyball team to the closing party and fund-raiser for Lesbian/Gay pride day (Diversité). We have exhibited, with pride, the works of over a dozen gay Québec artists.

K.O.X., the "mixed" dance club of the complex, has come under attack for its open door policy. Serious efforts are being made to discourage hostile, homophobic and just plain unpleasant straights from frequenting the club. For this very reason, as many as one hundred people are turned

away each night. K.O.X. is for lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgenders, queer straights, drag queens, butch dykes, leather men, fags, their brothers and sisters, their parents and friends. Our manifesto to this effect is prominently displayed throughout the club. K.O.X. will remain a queer establishment which celebrates diversity in all its forms and is proud to be the only Montréal bar to make this pledge. The best way to ensure a queer atmosphere in the club is for queers to take up the space that is rightfully theirs.

The recent closing of G-Spot, the lesbian bar of the complex, has fostered rumours that lesbians are no longer welcome at Station "C." Nothing could be further from the truth. That it remained open for as long as it did, while never being financially self sufficient, is evidence of our commitment to the lesbian community. We continue to consider our dyke clientele an essential part of K.O.X. Though lesbians have always been more than welcome at K.O.X., our emphasis in the past has been to attract them to G-Spot. We now feel free to actively seek their support of K.O.X. Consequently we are developing several programs directed specifically at lesbians, including a monthly "dyke bash" in K.O.X., starting March 2.

While the philosophy of Station "C" is firmly rooted in the celebration of diversity, it should not be to the exclusion of special same-sex events. Only with your continued support will Station "C" remain the premier Gay/Lesbian complex in Québec. Any questions, complaints, comments or suggestions should be directed to Nicolas or Paula at 523-0064. They will be warmly received.

Nicolas Jenkins  
Station "C"

## Key to the Villiage

Stala Gavrielides

Well girls I've found the golden key which unlocks the pleasures of Montreal's gay village. It isn't money, good looks or fancy dancing. It's a prick and two balls! So why am I bitching about the misogyny in the village? Well, it wasn't until the dance for LBGM's newsletter Queery, on Friday Feb. 11, that I came face-to-face with a blatant example of how the "boy's club" works at one of the bars. I won't name names, but it has three letters and starts with an 'S' --so you can figure it out for yourself. As soon as we are welcomed, even courted, we are taken for granted!! The bars want our money, but not us. Why? Because we don't have penises!

That night I attempted to get a drink at the bar and was a) ignored though I was holding a twenty dollar bill and b) got no drink, had my money thrown in my face and left in disgust. This is by no means the first incident at this bar, but one of many --and the management wonders why very few women are going to their "Queer Student" nights. It's elementary, you want our money, but you don't want us. Well, the fact of the matter is: **Where we go our money goes!** My money is the same as any faggot's -- the last time I checked Canadian dollars were still legal tender. The bills I or any other dyke carry say "Bank of Canada/Banque du Canada" on the front **not** "Girlie Money". The amazing thing about the whole incident was the fact that when the 'pretty-boy' bartender finally condescended to come to my direction he asked my friend Aaron what he would like, ignoring the fact that I was the one who was holding the money --I know the bars are dimly lit at the best of times but you'd have to be blind not to have seen the twenty dollar bill I was holding! When my friend directed him to me, 'pretty-boy' pretended not to know what a Brador is and that Molson brews it. After throwing my money in my face he proceeded to go and serve men on the other side of the bar who had not even had to indicate their desire for a drink. What is this crap? I don't have to put up with this shit from the employees and management at any bar. Why? Because they need my money more than

## LETTERS FROM CAMP

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## How I Got Stung



by the Stingers

In writing this story I had to fight with myself in what I was going to say. Nothing to intellectual; I like to keep it simple. This way every one can understand the bottom line.

Having played on many women's hockey teams and being part of the team, I always felt that there were a few women who had something to hide and would not be the kind of person to come right out and say it. So I developed a habit of not saying anything until I have observed the people and conversation for a couple of hours or days.

Depending on how much has been said.

Well, I wanted to try out for the Concordia Women's Hockey team and was invited down to practice. So I went out to the Loyola campus and met the Assistant Coach and nervously walked into the dressing room.

Now, what I saw was a bunch of androgynous women, which was to my surprise, great! I thought that everything was going to be okay. I introduced myself and everyone was kindly doing the same. It was not really that hard but I did feel somewhat uncomfortable by the

woman who was sitting at my right. I felt some sort of mixed negative and positive energy.

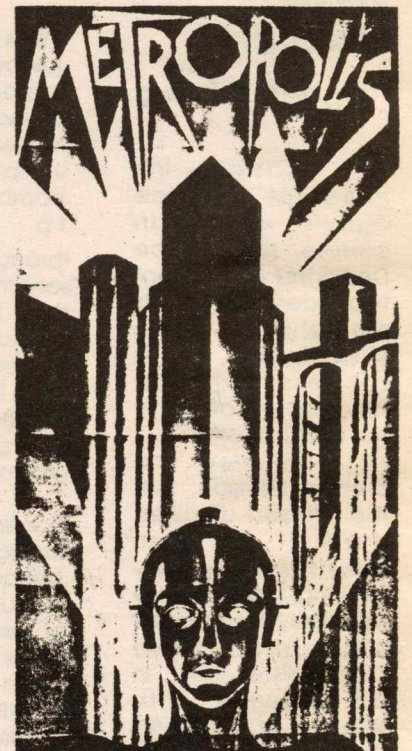
But what happened in the next 10 minutes was awfully surprising.

Some of the women were talking about being "spermless for a week" and another was saying how she was "dickless for a week". Now I can remember once in a while to be reminded that we were suppose to be talking hockey, and to hear this crap, made me feel twice as uncomfortable as before. I looked around at some of the other women for some of their facial reactions and I could see that this was a certain part of the team that was into this and another part that just did not care. But in a way I took offense to it.

When I was on the ice, I found out that there is a guy who is not part of the team (obvious observation), but he was allowed to do what ever he wanted while the team practiced. I also took offense to that, I would wonder if one of the women would be able to do the same if she wanted too.

And then there was the women who were telling this guy that he skates like a fag. Now, I had seen it all. I

was not going to disclose any part of my life; with the exception of my hockey history. So I was really put off and I am sure that this is not new. I would like to go further into detail but I am just to lazy for now. So you will be sure there will be a part two to this lovely story. Stay tuned.



## Zero Patience

(Continué de la page 1)

Cette histoire ne serait pas complète sans un petit peu d'amour et bien elle l'en a. Vers le milieu du film non-seulement les émotions de "Dick" changent mais aussi ses sentiments envers "Zero" qu'il ne regarde plus comme une partie de son recherche mais plutôt comme une personne qu'il aime et qui l'aime aussi.

Greyson comme directeur ne croit pas qu'un film doit avoir nécessairement de personnages gais ou lesbiennes qui donnent une image positive. Ce film nous montre clairement cette croyance. Tous les personnages sont plutôt quotidiens contrairement aux scénarios d'Hollywood.

"Un ami m'a dit qu'un auteur doit être capable de cannibaliser la vie aux gens - il faut prendre la vérité, la vraie vérité de la vie de gens et il faut en avaler les conséquences, au lieu d'éviter d'offenser."

-John Greyson

Ce film pourrait se décrire comme un documentaire musical comique, qui est sûr d'avoir quelque chose que tout le monde aimera, aussi bien que faire un commentaire important sur un sujet qui marque nos temps.



## Editorial

### Last and Final Words!

Stala M. Gavrielides

Many people think that being an editor is such a powerful position, that one cannot help but have fun, if only that were true. Although I have loved being a co-editor I feel the time has come to step down and let some other brave and energetic soul take over this exciting position. To be a co-editor of **Letters from Camp** you need daring, enthusiasm, and above all, a flair for bitchiness. It is these qualities that have made Aaron a perfect colleague and co-editor.

I would like to see **Letters from Camp** flourish and continue to improve with the help of other hands, and wish all those who contribute to its pages all the best of luck in the future.

## LETTERS FROM CAMP WANTS YOU!

The editors of Letters From Camp have finished their term. If you are interested in contributing to the organization of this paper call 848-7414

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# features

## Lesbians Defend Their Land From Threats

Justice Dept.  
reluctantly  
enters  
Mississippi

Leslie Feinberg

Citing the threat of violence against a lesbian couple, the Justice Department has sent two federal civil rights mediators to Overt, Mississippi. It's a success for the struggle-but certainly not the end of it.

Wanda and Brenda Henson, with the support of allies, have been courageously defending the 120-acre farm they bought last July and named Camp Sister Spirit. In an interview with *Workers World*, Wanda Henson described the campaign of terror that began Nov. 8. "We found a dog shot and draped on our mailbox. There were Kotex on the side and a nine millimeter hole in the mailbox."

When the sheriff came out to investigate, "The first thing he asks me: 'Are there any Blacks in your organization?' I said: Yes sir, and Jewish folks and all kinds of folks in our organization. And three days later I bought me a shotgun. I'm a pacifist, so it took me awhile to figure out the cops weren't gonna be on our side."

Lots of laws were broken in the right-wing campaign of terror aimed at driving the women from their land. Still the Justice Department refused to get involved, using the excuse that there is no federal law banning discrimination or violence against lesbians and gay men.

But when the Hensons hefted rifles to back up their vows not to leave, organized supporters into armed self-defense patrols, and told their story to every newspaper, radio and talk show audience that would listen, they won national recognition and support. National lesbian and gay

organizations called, faxed and wrote to the Justice Department, pressing the Hensons' demand that it intervene. That's what forced the Justice Department to respond. Janet Reno acknowledged a federal law had been violated when a bomb threat was sent to the Hensons through the mail. She sent mediators. This is the first time the Justice Department has ever taken up a case involving the harassment of lesbians and gay men. It is a hard-won precedent.

But this doesn't mean the struggle is over. The Justice Department is a reluctant intervener at best. What role it plays has yet to be seen. The first mediators to arrive praised those who are whipping up the hate campaign against the women as "genuinely caring", according to the New York Times Feb. 21.

### ROLE OF THE POLICE

"I think the struggle has just begun," Wanda Henson stressed. "Violence against us has escalated in the last couple of days. That's a reaction to Reno's sending of the mediation team."

At 1.50 p.m. on Feb. 19, bursts of automatic carbine fire just behind the house punctuated the silence. "Usually they come shootin' at night. I fired three warning shots. They were so close we could hear 'em talking." The two sheriff's deputies and game warden didn't show up until 2.46 p.m. By the time they arrived all the bullet casings had disappeared.

Henson said they'd had a run-in with the sheriff only the day before after they demanded he stop sending out an abusive and unresponsive deputy to investigate the Hensons' charges. The sheriff claimed that might hamper the ability of his department to respond. "Well, you better figure that out before something happens," Henson told him.

Jones County Sheriff Maurice Hooks spoke out against the Hensons at the first right-wing "town meeting" in

December and was seen collecting money for the reactionary campaign in January. One of the deputy sheriffs travelled to Chicago with 40 other bigots in order to jeer the Hensons from the audience when they appeared on a television talk show there.

In an earlier shooting incident, Henson remembered, "one deputy come out and said it's hunting season." Henson reminded him that it's illegal to hunt at night. "And it's not hunting season right now," she noted.



When the Hensons turned over the bomb-threat letter to the FBI they xeroxed a copy first. Why? "Stuff always seems to get lost. Like when the dog got shot. The deputy picked up those two bullet casings, but his report didn't mention them. He didn't report that the dog was shot. At the time, he told us to just throw the dog in the ditch. But she died for this cause. Somebody killed her because of us, so we gave her a respectable burial on our land."

### FIGHTING FOR OUR RIGHTS

Wanda Henson's voice thickened with anger: "To have your government officials involved - that is government repression against the people. This is supposed to be a democracy. No official in this state has spoken out for us and one representative spoke out against us. If my state doesn't do something to protect my life then it's the

federal government's responsibility.

"The sheer fact of the matter is that many, many of my lesbian sisters and

gay brothers have been dying in the streets for years and years. They don't have time to defend their civil rights - they get killed. That brother in Tyler, Texas, they murdered, the women and men in the Northwest who got murdered, my brothers in New Orleans. If you link it all together you see it's happening all over the country. The difference is we're alive; were fighting for our civil rights."

The anti-gay bigots have used many labels for their

be a separation of church and state."

"We're not included in the civil rights law. There are gaping holes in the list of civil rights violations. Queers have no rights. Well I got a right to a job. I got a right to build anything I want on our land. This issue ain't muddled. It's got a whole lot of issues in it, including religious freedom. In this case - freedom from religion."

### SCARED AND FEARLESS

The property owner on the adjacent land recently put up a firing range on the edge of Camp Sister Spirit. As a result, men in fatigues with guns are poised on the southern edge of the property line. Henson said: "As fast as money comes in we're using it to put up \$7,000 worth of ugly fencing. And we need money now for an electric generator. We remember during the civil rights movement of the 1960s they came in and cut the power lines before they murdered people. We feel as long as we can keep the lights on with a power generator, it might enable us to get away. And you got to have numbers on your side. That's another thing I learned from the 1960s. The struggle for civil rights has always been my passion. I never thought I'd use those lessons from history."

"I'm gonna stay here even if they kill me. And if they do I hope that all the lesbians and gay men descend on Mississippi like never before. I remember gays and lesbians fighting side-by-side for civil rights in the 1960s. I'll lay down my life if that's what it takes because I'm sick of homophobia. I'm not leaving my land."

"It's a funny thing to think that you're scared and fearless - all at the same time. I'm a strong Mississippian. I been here all my life. I lived 77 miles from these woods. Bottom line: I'm a poor woman. I don't have the money to do this kind of fight. But we ain't afraid to speak out. That's all we got is our voice. Our only recourse right now is the media, but at least you all been watching us. I'll tell you I appreciate it

because if eyes were not on us, we might not still be here."

"When I was a kid raised in the 1960s, I clearly remember thinking something was very wrong about the racist hatred that was happening. That's what's gonna happen with the kids now seeing their parents hating us. Most people who come by to support us are very young or very old. More people of color are supporting us and telling us to keep hanging on. An old woman told us her house was shot up three times in 1962. 'And still we don't really have freedom, but it's better,' she told us."

Wanda Henson's voice brimmed with emotion: "We're the cutting edge. A friend told me it's like you're running in a race with the baton and you're passing it from one person to the next. You carry it for as long as you can and then you pass it on. She also told me commitment is not a feeling, it's an action. Tell folks to come on up here and make a stand with us."

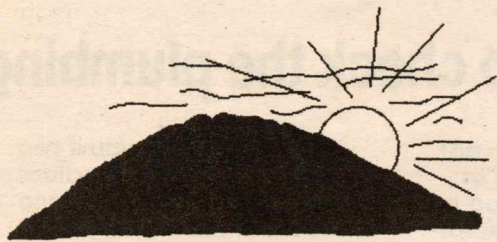
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### LETTERS FROM CAMP WANTS YOU!

THE EDITORS OF LETTERS FROM CAMP HAVE FINISHED THEIR TERM. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN CONTRIBUTING TO THE ORGANIZATION OF THIS PAPER CALL 848-7414







## Up Aunt Ida's Alley\*

*"A lifetime of having to listen to disco music is almost too high a price to pay for one's sexual orientation"*  
- Quentin Crisp.

Friday 25 June 1993,  
The Steps, Church  
and Wellesley,  
Toronto.

I sit on the top step in front of the one hour photo place, sipping my vanilla flavoured coffee, smoking Players Smooth. All the neighborhood is adorned with multi-coloured balloons and rainbow flags in anticipation of Pride Day coming up on Sunday. Still, nothing can lift my mood. I just sit there, bemoaning my lack of employment and lack of money. Dejected, I hang my head and stare at my legs. I notice how fat I've gotten. I get even more depressed.

*Oh well, I think to myself, at least I've got my degree. That must count for something.*

"Oh, smell her Mary" hisses a leather clone at some inanimate person, snapping his fingers all around him like he was trying to get rid of imaginary insects buzzing around him.

*Do I have to? Isn't the coffee putrid enough? You're so original: you should have your own show. Wouldn't you like that? After all, isn't that why you're auditioning here? You're hoping that one of the fawning adoring queers in the audience is a talent scout questing in vain for the next big thing?*

*... Christ, get me out of here! I wish I was back in Québec. Even though I had no friends and I was constantly lonely, at least I was thin and I looked good. And no one acted like a professional faggot the way that everyone does here (or if they did, at least I didn't understand, so it was cool.) Thank Christ I might be going to Montréal in September. Please, McGill, let me in! Please September, hurry up and get here!*

Friday 22 October  
1993. C.Q.C.  
Meeting.

Here I am in Montréal and guess what: I'm not half as lonely as I thought I'd be. I actually have met some nice people that are half-decent and can talk about more than just Madonna's latest shocking escapade and hair care products (even though McGill did spend their first meeting talking about the

sociological implications of the *Vanity Fair* cover with k.d. lang and Cindy Crawford

and how it was so revolutionary and henceforth would be remembered as a landmark in the revolution and struggle for acceptance of gays and (especially) lesbians by mainstream society and how lesbianism was now in vogue and all that shit. No wonder I feel more at home at these meetings, even though I'm a McGill student. I just wish these meetings would actually have discussions instead of talking about business and how CUSA has screwed them over and how some unknown entity on CUSA is homophobic. If they could actually

get beyond this, and have a discussion, it probably would be pretty good as it seems that, unlike McGill, these people actually have brains and some original thoughts. As well, apart from Dirk, who always makes a point of mentioning how he is a graduate student every time he breaks the sour expression on his face to speak (that is when he's not being catty, or putting someone else down or responding "wittily" [read insulting back] to someone else in a thoroughly cliché fashion, which is quite rare), everyone seems quite approachable, and even nice. Imagine that! Even so, I doubt I have anything in common with anyone at these types of meetings, apart from my sexual orientation. That point came in loud and clear a few weeks ago at the Agora, when I programmed

"Achy Breaky Heart", "YMCA" (both as a joke) and "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction" on the jukebox. Fuck, everyone must think I'm really weird, but fuck them. That wouldn't be a first: I've been considered bizarre by many people before them and doubtless, will be considered strange by many after they're gone. Don't they have a cheesy sense of humour? Am I really the only faggot alive who loves

the Rolling Stones, the Kinks, the Beatles, Elvis Costello, Donovan, the Beautiful South, Moxy Frúvous, the Dayglo Abortions, sixties music, hard rock,

punk, heavy metal and grunge?

Is there something genetically wrong with me that I like all of this and am still nevertheless queer? Maybe it's true what my friend Lea says; maybe I am a closet heterosexual. Oh well, the McGill dance at the (it is to laugh) William Shatner building is tonight; maybe I'll meet Kurt Cobain or Evan Dando, who will sweep me off my feet and take me home and get me really stoned and then have his wont with me. Maybe I'll meet the man of my dreams there. Not bloody likely, but one can always hope nonetheless. In any case, given the CQC dance a few weeks ago, the Black and Blue Party and the dance tonight, I think I'm beginning to fall in love nonetheless- with Montréal. It's definitely a million times better than that "world class city",

Hogtown. Thank God I moved; my life has improved a million fold as a result.

Friday 25 February  
1994.

Another day of 30 centimeter snowfalls and -15 degree temperatures

- the joys of Montréal in winter. I could go out tonight, but why bother? I'd just get bored with the music; I'm already bored seeing the same faces with nothing interesting coming out of them. And with anyone new and attractive that I'd like to talk to (that is, if I had the balls to do so before Sammy from CQC got a hold of them), the minute I'd go up and talk to them in French, they'd notice my accent (even though I don't think my French is really that bad) and say something like

*"allez chier, maudit anglais. Fichez moi la paix."*

Or if he speaks English, he'd take offence that I addressed him in French (I wonder how Sammy does it, given that not only does he speak no French, but turns off mentally at the sound of French phonemes. And still, he ends up working three men at a time. Maybe the reason why I'm so bitter toward him is that I'm jealous. Still, why am I jealous of him? It's not like he's an Adonis or anything.). Or if that wasn't the case, he'd notice my teeth, or my gut (I'm gaining weight again. Fuck, soon they're going to be grabbing my gut again and saying stuff like *"c'est dommage que tu sois gros comme un porc/ une tonne!"*, like that guy in *Taverne le Drague* in Québec City in the summer of 1992. And after I've been trying

Continued on page 6

# K.O.X.

## FIERCE GAY FUN!

TUESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY SUNDAY

COMPLIMENTARY ADMISSION FOR ONE BEFORE MIDNIGHT  
WITH THIS AD ON FRIDAYS

# 1450 STE-CATHERINE EAST



Aunt Ida,

continued from page 5

so hard to lose it. I guess I'm just not cut out to be thin. Yet, there's nothing sadder or more pathetic than a fat fag). So I figure, why bother? My ego isn't that impenetrably solid. I've come to the conclusion that it's impossible to meet people here. The idea that Montréal people are really outgoing is a myth: most of the time, they can't be bothered to know you/ take an interest in you unless you were a dancer on the *Girlie Show* tour or something. *Société Distincte*? I think not. The only difference between here and Toronto is phonetic: they have a slightly different accent here. If you can ignore the people (I was born there, so I've got bitch rights), Toronto isn't really that bad: at least it has half-decent bookstores and radio stations (well, CFNY has to count for something). Wish I could say that about Montréal.

Yet death before I have to return there I will I ever find anywhere that I'll fit in? Or am I condemned to be an eternal misfit? Can I really keep changing the backdrop to hide the essential shittiness of life? Why do I chain myself to another round of having to get to know strangers who basically couldn't give a fuck and won't even remember your face five minutes after you're gone? Anyone for Seattle or Vancouver?

## Editorial Protest over Police Raid

Aaron Pollard

As a participant in the demonstration on Saturday, February 19, held in protest of the Katakombes raid I feel it necessary to make some statements regarding the success of the event and the way it was subsequently represented in print.

It is important, when analyzing the protest, to remember that it was an ad-hoc demonstration; therefore any criticism over organizational problems should be contextualized by the fact that organizers had very little time to plan the event. My first observation upon arriving

\* Aunt Ida, played by the late Edith Massey, is a character in the 1974 John Waters' film *Female Trouble*. In spite of an abnormally slow metabolism/non-functioning thyroid gland, she insists on wearing a peekaboo leather outfit throughout the film. When she's not harassing Dawn Davenport (Divine), she's trying to convert her nephew Gator to homosexuality, saying things such as:

"Oh Gator, I wish you'd turn nelly, and find a nice beautician boyfriend."

"I just figure, if they're dumb, they're straight; and if they're smart, they're queer."

and my personal favourite:

"The world of heterosexuality is a sick and boring life!"

Join the

CQC

for a "whale" of a time

outside Station "C" that night was that there were no placards or signs telling onlookers what the protest was about. I found the lack of signs to be very curious since I have seen many placards at spontaneous demonstrations in the past. Though political groups will often mass produce placards for a rally, the most witty, thought provoking signs are usually the "one-offs" that individuals make. Thus placard-making can be a very empowering device because it allows individuals to make specific, personal statements while supporting a more general cause.

Another point of contention I have is with the individuals who wanted to remain in "the village" rather than march, as was originally suggested, to station 33 (the police station responsible for orchestrating the raid). This kind of conflict always seems to arise at these events. I cannot understand the logic behind causing a disruption only in one's own neighborhood. The point of the

My reason for writing this article is to warn readers about certain low profile officials and what they can do, and your rights if you should ever have to deal with one. If you live long enough in Montréal you are more than likely to meet up with one, so beware!

Much like the MUC, these city by-law enforcement officers abuse their authority. The officials I am referring to are **Montreal's Housing and Fire Prevention officers**. Given the close relationship between the MUC and such officials, you should consider a visit from a city inspector as the same as being called on by a police officer. However, it is easier for a fire inspector to get access to a property. Unlike the MUC who are required by law to obtain a warrant, with probable cause before entering and searching a dwelling, these health and fire inspectors only need send you a notice by bailiff to enter and search. It is often the case that they have randomly selected your neighbourhood and are just passing through a few times.

If you should decide to invite an inspector into your home, your biggest problem will be determining if he is genuine. One way you can verify an inspector's credentials is to call the MUC police and check their identification. Remember that though they may be wearing

demonstration was not to block traffic in front of K.O.X., it was to send a message to the police and the people of Montréal that we will not tolerate police hostility and discrimination. As usual the number of people who wanted to remain was very small and despite their predictions of doom, the rest of us marched on without any further disturbances or problems.

Over all, those who participated in the demonstration seemed to feel it was a success. There was a sense of optimism at the end of the march and recognition that a very diverse group of people had stood together in "solidarité" over the issue of police harassment. Many people from various backgrounds - including students, Richard Barnabé supporters, workers, and political activists - spoke throughout the demonstration. Conversely, the *Hour* reported that the speakers list consisted of "a group of Upper Class Twits." As one of the people who spoke I

continued on next page (Police Raid Protest)

# The inspector isn't here just to check the plumbing!

uniforms they are not required by law to do so -- **always ask for ID**. Once in your home the inspector can decide to require that you reduce the amount of printed matter and clothes you own. The inspector has discretion regarding the fire hazard posed by the quantity of printed matter you have in your apartment -- unlike Toronto where there are definitive by-laws regarding what presents a fire hazard, Montréal leaves this entirely open to the whims of its city officials. Montréal's Fire inspectors need only allow you to have printed matter which relates to your income and tax returns.

When you are satisfied that you are dealing with a genuine inspector, you have the right to deny access to any so-called affiliates-- **if they don't have the appropriate ID, DON'T LET THEM IN!** So what are you in for when the inspector calls? Well, he can call in a physician or a psychiatrist to intimidate you. One reason for calling in a doctor is that they may want to distract you or have you do something which they cannot legally require you to do. When I spoke to a doctor and asked him what he would think when called in by an inspector, he replied that firstly he would think they were harassing you and that he was being used by the inspectors. Your biggest problem is not the doctor because you have the right to refuse. The doctor

will probably ask you if you want or need medical help. He may ask you to count to ten or what day it is. My advice is to answer responsibly, no matter how angry you are with the inspector and avoid any abusive outbursts as they are likely to create problems. However, you do

have the right to point out that you are angry and disgusted by this invasion of your privacy. If you believe that the inspector is doing something illegal you can call the MUC police. I advise that you have a witness, get a police report or take pictures if you should have to sue for damages. I advise ignoring notices that they are in your area and don't let them in under any circumstances!!

Given that although Montréal is one of the most wealthy cities and spends more money per capita than any other on municipal services, it is nonetheless the arson capital of Canada. Even so the city has no arson squad, but spends its money on Fire inspectors when it is a well known fact that most fires are caused by arson and smoking, not by the quantity of printed matter or clothing in an apartment. Because of criticism of the city's cutting of the Fire Department budget the MCN government employed fire prevention inspectors. These officials are not trained in any systematic way, often being handed powers with only 100 hours of training and at best just a high school diploma. The city should put more money in the Fire Department and set up an arson squad if it really wants to prevent fire.

John Anderson

I need them! So if they want my cash, they'll have to shape up, or else **FUCK OFF!!**

Not only can't I get a drink, I have to live in fear of being accosted by a horde of faggots in the women's bathroom, or being accused of not having checked my coat because the little faggot at the coat check didn't give me the ticket. What very few queer men remember is that they owe their existence to women! Well, of course their mothers aren't women at all, they're MOM! If it wasn't for the fact that their mothers possessed a uterus, menstruated and tolerated being impregnated the "darlings of the village" would not exist or have the opportunity take it up the arse! It is their mothers who had to put up with looking like a beached whale for 9 months, went through several hours of excruciating labour pains and then continued to wipe their noses, asses and mouths for the next 20 years. None of the boys of the village would ever

## Key to the Village,

continued from page 2

dream of forcing their mother to wipe their urine from the toilet seat, or have her harassed by some guy whilst she's in the women's bathroom, and yet they do this on a regular basis to dykes that frequent the bars on any night other than "dyke night".

No this is not a mere polemic, it's a declaration of war. So why don't all you girls out there flick through the Sears catalogue and find yourselves a pair of hand held shears -- cut first and ask questions later!! Whether you're offended or not, **"I frankly don't give a damn my dears!"** So to all the "darlings of the village" I say, **"Beware the dyke with long dark hair!"**



## Theatre Human Remains and the True Nature of Love

The Department of Theatre of Concordia University will be presenting the Edmonton dramatist, Brad Fraser's play, *Human Remains and the True Nature of Love* from April 14 to 17. The play has previously enjoyed successful runs in Edmonton, Calgary, Vancouver, Toronto, Chicago and New York. *Time* magazine declared it one of the ten best plays of 1991 and it has been translated into Italian and German. Most recently, the play has been adapted to a film (*Love and Human Remains*) by one of Québec's foremost directors, Denys Arcand.

*Human Remains* is an unusual play about human relationships - unusual in the sense that most of the relationships presented on the stage have gone slightly, if not entirely, awry. As provocative drama, it explores various manifestations of sexual desire and abuse, key elements that propel all characters into action throughout the course of the play.

Friends since adolescence, Candy (a heterosexual book reviewer with lesbian tendencies) and David (a gay actor-turned-waiter) share an apartment together in downtown Edmonton. The story focuses on the trials and tribulations of their love-lives. Little by little, long-buried secrets emerge. Inner-most feelings about their old friends Dana (who committed suicide) and Bernie (her lover at the time), slowly materialize. Their sexual encounters, some "forbidden," some not, are recounted or enacted quite graphically before our eyes.

Replete with a psychopathic serial killer, a prostitute with psychic abilities, a somewhat violent ménage à trois, S/M and spurting blood the play confronts its performers and audiences with an uncompromisingly gritty subject matter. Concordia's theatre department has chosen to mount a play that is both challenging and timely.

Concordia's production of *Human Remains* is co-directed by Deborah Cottle and David Allan King. It will play at the F.C. Smith Auditorium, (Loyola Campus) 7141 Sherbrooke St W, side entrance, Loyola

Chapel from April 14 through 17 at 8pm. Prices are \$4.00 for students and seniors, \$6.00 regular admission.

YOU'RE NOT ALONE, HONEY  
MY SHAMPOO LASTS LONGER  
THAN MY RELATIONSHIPS...



### LETTERS FROM CAMP

ce veut un journal avangardiste avec un esprit de collectivité. Par le fait même, nous vous offrons la possibilité de participer à notre journal par vos écrits (poèmes, lettres d'opinions, nouvelles, bandes dessinées, etc). Toutefois, nous nous réservons le droit de décider du contenu du journal.

Les soumissions sont acceptées entre le 15 et le 20 de chaque mois.

### Police Raid Protest

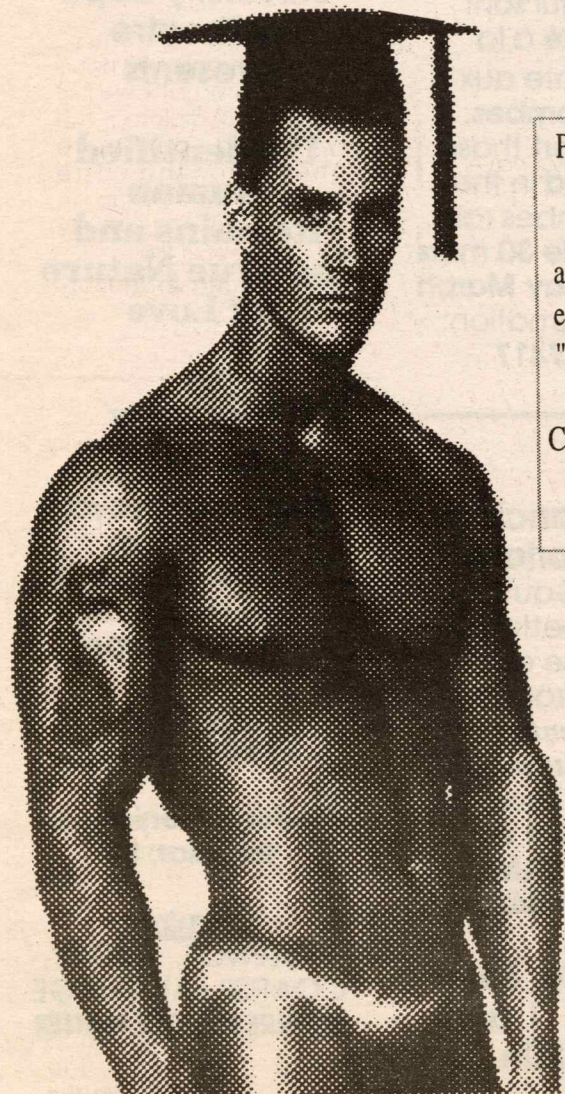
(continued from page 6)

find it ironic that I am accused of being upper class when I have barely enough money to eat. As to whether or not I am a twit, I suppose it is a matter of opinion. Suffice to say that it is easy to resort to name calling when one is writing anonymously.

Though I was not surprised to see that media representation of the event tended to underplay its importance I found the article in *Hour* ("Secret City: Instant Teller" February 24 1994) to be particularly misinformed. It stated that the International Socialists "derailed" the demonstration which is simply untrue. Some members of the IS helped to print and distribute flyers for the event just as people at Station "C" and students from UQAM and Concordia's CQC helped promote the demonstration. Megaphones were provided by a number of groups. Only one member of the IS actually made a speech, which was short and eloquent and did not plug the International Socialist Party contrary to what was implied by the *Hour*. It seems, once again, that one can rely little on the mainstream press for fair coverage of events. Even self-proclaimed liberal magazines such as the *Hour* and the *Mirror* remain sensationalistic in their approach to contentious issues.

Despite the minor problems that occurred during the demonstration on February 19 and despite the subsequent media representation, the event served to focus peoples anger over the police raid and over police harassment, in general. The fact that the demonstration received any media coverage at all marks a significant change from the situation only a few decades ago. There are bound to be further actions in support of those who must stand trial in the coming weeks. A demonstration is in the works for the morning of March 30 when the court cases begin. I would like to end this editorial by stating my support for further action; continued success in ending police harassment depends on the kind of commitment exhibited on the February 19 protest.

# EVERY FRIDAY, QUEER STUDENTS NIGHT



President of the Student Council, Buddy is 6 foot and 9 inches' with brown hair and blue eyes; always well dressed, which might explain why he is a salesperson at "Le Château". Amb: to become a professional masseur.

Cher. Mem.: 'Disco Porno' Sundays at SKY. Fav.Ex: "Trust Sugar" "I gave him Nooch"

5 ft 6 inches, 110 pnds., Sylvie is the star player in her local baseball team. Her fingernails are usually dirty because of her part-time job at "Esso" gas station. Her dream: "spending time" with Liza Minelli and Martina Navratilova.

Cher.Mem: Sex Lesbian Thursdays at SKY. K.D Lang concert 92'. Hobbys: Shaving and Deep sea diving.



# SKY

1474 STE CATHERINE EST. 522-2475

STUDENTS SPECIALS ALL NIGHT LONG  
ASK FOR YOUR CARD



## Reggie's or Bust

On Saturday, March 19 the Concordia Queer Collective held a dance at Reggie's to raise money for LETTERS FROM CAMP. Most people who came to the party seemed to enjoy themselves so it can be said that the dance was a success from this standpoint. However the dance proved to be a harrowing experience for its organizers. Other than the usual problems of straights coming in for a sneak peek at queers in action - there were even a couple of psychology from John Abbott who want to perform tests to see if queers are more extroverted or introverted than straights - there were unforeseen difficulties with Reggie's management.

Late in the evening, four people who were friends of the manager tried to enter without paying. Since the cover charge was to go to a non-profit organization who's members were volunteering their time that evening we thought it reasonable to charge these people the same price charged everybody else. The management informed us that these people were to enter free of charge because Reggie's needed the money they would spend on beer. When we

protested that this was unfair to us and to every one else in the bar they accused us of trying to sabotage their business. In a backroom meeting, one of the organizers was shown a contract stating that management had the right to revoke the cover charge. It should be noted here that the CQC had asked for a copy of this contract on numerous occasions prior to the dance which was always "misplaced," according to the manager. Reggie's management did not rescind until we threatened to end the party altogether at which point they apologized profusely and let the matter rest.

To top the evening off, a person who allegedly is creating an advertisement for Reggie's entered with a video camera. We were given no prior notice that any part of the party would be video taped. Considering the amount of discrimination that continues to occur against queers in the work-place and in society, in general it is totally unreasonable to expect that the party be video-taped - especially without prior consent. Again we were met with resistance when we asked the camera person to leave.

Since September, the CQC has been trying to organize an on-campus dance. When Reggie's opened members of CUSA stated that there were to be no dances held by Student organizations on peak evenings (Thursday, Friday, Saturday). Though CUSA CORP has changed its position and has

allowed our dance to occur, they are acting as if they have done the CQC a great favor. Need we remind CUSA CORP of the free advertising we have done for them. Need we remind them also that on February 18 we organized a successful party at SKY which brought in approximately twice the number of people who normally frequent the bar on Friday nights. Since CUSA does not fund "non-academic organizations" we are forced to increase our fund-raising efforts this year though it seems that on-campus fund-raising is not a viable option. If people are interested in further on-campus queer dances substantial effort will have to be placed on CUSA and CUSA CORP management.

**The Dance Committee, CQC**

### LETTERS FROM CAMP WANTS YOU!

The editors of Letters From Camp have finished their term. If you are interested in contributing to the organization of this paper call 848-7414

**Why have Stala and Aaron resigned as editors? Could it be because they are simply not available!**



# calendar

To publicize your event in the  
**LETTERS FROM CAMP**  
Calendar call 848-7417



**Thurs./Jeudi 24 mars**  
Benefit for/ Soirée  
Bénéfice pour  
**WOMENS AIDS ACTION MONTREAL**  
à SKY 1474 St-Catherine Est.  
**Special Guest DJ ZAB**

**Annie Martin**  
**figure**  
26 mars au 24 avril, 1994  
vernissage: le 26 mars à 1500

**article**  
15, Mont-Royal Ouest  
du mercredi au dimanche  
du 12h à 17h

### MANIFESTATION DEMONSTRATION

En solidarité avec ceux qui sont accusé à la descente aux **Katakombes**.

To support those accused in the Katakombes raid.  
**Mercredi le 30 mars**  
**Wednesday March 30.** Information: 848-7417

### Théâtre :

**A toi Francis in memoriam**  
Ives D. Gauthier  
Auteur, metteur en scène et chorégraphe.  
Au centre communautaire Gai Lesbienne Montréal.  
**Billets: 5\$ en vente au CCGLM.**  
Tel: 528 8424

**24, 25, 26, 30 et 31 mars. 1 avril, 1994 à 20h 30**

**14 - 17 April, 8 p.m.**  
**Loyola Campus, Concordia University Dept. of Theatre presents**

**Unidentified Human Remains and the True Nature of Love**

by  
**Brad Fraser**

At the F.C. Smith Auditorium, Loyola Campus  
7141 Sherbrooke W, side entrance, Loyola chapel

**Preview**  
13 April, 8 p.m.

**Students/Seniors: \$4**  
**Regular: \$6**

**Warning:**  
VIOLENCE, NUDITY,  
COARSE LANGUAGE  
MATURE SUBJECT MATTER